THE LADY EVELYN

A Story of Today

BY MAX PEMBERTON

Gavin and Arthur Kenyon no sooner reach Bukharest than they discover that Georges Odin is alive and safe in his mountain home, that the story told by his son, the Count, is a blackmailing, revengeful fabrication. Gavin against the advice of the Ministry boldly resolves to find old Odin in his wild Balkan fastnesses and by guile or persuasion take him back to England as a living refutation of the Count's story. He and Arthur hire an armed retinue and then set forth on their dangerous errand to the scene of Robert Forester's mad youth as a member of Zallony's revolutionary brigands. After many adventures, one night they are captured by a band of gypsies and carried off to an almost inaccessible castle high in the mountains. It is Setchevo, the ancestral home of the blind old Chevalier Odin.

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He touched the handle of a great knife at his girdle significantly, and some of the others, as though understanding him, closed about the pony significantly while Gavin mounted. A similar attention being paid to Arthur Kenyon was not received so kindly; for no sooner did they attempt to lift him roughly to the saddle than he turned about and dealt the first of them a rousing blow which stretched the fellow full length upon the grass and left him insensible there. The act was within an ace of costing him his life. Knives sprung from sheathes, antique pistols were flourished—there were cries and counter-cries; and then, as though miraculously, a louder voice from some one hidden in the wood commanding them to silence. In that moment, the gypsy chief flung himself before Kenyon and protected him with hands uplifted and curses on his lips.

"Dogs and carrion—do you forget whom you obey?" he almost shrieked, and then to the Englishman, "You are mad, mein herr—be wise or I will kill you."

Kenyon, strangely nonchalant through it all, shrugged his shoulders and clambered upon the back of the pony. Gavin turned deadly pale in spite of himself, breathed a full breath again, and desired nothing more of fate than that they should quit the cursed wood without further loss of time. As though enough evil had not come to him there, he espied, as they rode from the place, the dead body of his servant, the Turk, face downwards with the knife that killed him still protruding from his shoulders. And he doubted if the wretched Greek, so brutally maimed in the fire, still lived or must be numbered a second victim of the night.

Had he been a fool to leave England upon such an errand at all, or did the circumstances of his visit justify him? Of this he did not believe that he was the best judge. That which he had done had been done for the sake of one whose sweet voice seemed to speak of courage even at such an hour—Evelyn, the woman who first had taught him what man's love could be; whose fair image went with him as he rode, the stately figure of his dreams, the gentle Evelyn for whom the supreme adoration and pity of his life were reserved. If ignominy were his ultimate reward, he cared nothing—no danger, no peril of the way, must be set against the happiness, nay, the very soul's salvation, of her who had said to him, "I love you!"

This had been the whole spirit of his journey, and it did not desert him now when the gypsies set out upon the mountain road and he understood that he was a helpless hostage in their hands. As for Arthur Kenyon, he, with English stolidity, still chose to regard the whole scene as a jest and to comment upon it from such a standpoint. To him the picturesque environment of height and valley, forests of pine and sleeping pastures, were less than nothing at all. He did not care a blade of grass for the first roseate glow of dawn in the Eastern sky; for the shimmer of gold upon the majestic landscape, or the jewels sprayed by the stream below them. He had met an adventure and he gloried in it. Begging a cigarette from the nearest gypsy, he thanked the fellow for a light, and so fell to the thirty words of German bequeathed to him by that splendid foundation of one William at Hinchester. There were "havenzie's" and "Ich Wimsche's" enough to have served a threepenny manual of traveller's talk here. Neither understood the other and each was happy.

"The man's a born idiot," Arthur said to Gavin at last. "I ask him where the road leads to and he says 'half-an-hour.'"

"Meaning we are half-an-hour from our destination."

"Then why the deuce can't he say so in plain English?"

Gavin smiled, but his gaze was set upon the ancient ruin his quick eye had observed upon a height of the green mountain above them. He wondered if the path would carry them by it, or pierce the hills and leave the castle, for such it plainly had been, upon their left hands. But for the circumstances in which he approached it, the scene had been wild and strange enough to have awakened all an artist's dormant capacities for admiration. They were well above the pine woods by this time and could look back upon a fertile valley, exquisitely green, and bordered by shining rivers. Villages, churches, farms were so many dolls' houses planted upon mighty fields while midget beasts awakened to the day.

Gavin could not but be sensible of the majesty of this scene; nor did he find the old castle out of harmony with its beauties. The building, which he now perceived that they were approaching, had been built in a cleft of the hills, at a point where the torrent fell in a thunder of silver spray to a deep blue pool far down in the valley below. Clinging, as it were, to the very face of a precipitous cliff, a drawbridge spanned the torrent and gave access to the mountain road upon the further side of the pass; but so narrow was the river and so perpendicular the rocks that it seemed as though men might clasp hands across the abyss or a good horse take it in the stride of a gallop.

"This is the place, by Mahomet," said Arthur dryly . . . and he added, "What a devil of a house for a week-end!"

Gavin bade him listen. A voice across the chasm replied to the gypsy hail.

"Don't you recognize that?" he asked; "it's the voice we heard in the wood. This evidently is where we get down. Well, I'm glad of that anyhow."

It was as he said. The cavalcade had come to its journey's end; and there, picturesquely grouped upon the narrow road, were men and mules and mountain ponies, giving more than a welcome splash of color to the neighboring monotony of rock and shrub, and right glad all to be once more at their ease. It now became plain that none but the gypsy leader was to enter the Castle with the prisoners; and he, when he had addressed some loud words to the others (for the roar of the torrent compelled him to shout), passed first across the bridge, leading Kenyon's pony and calling to the other to follow him. Just a glance the men could turn upon raging waters, here of the deepest blue, there a sour green, or again but a boiling, tumbling mass of writhing foam—just this and the vista of the sheer, cruel rocks and the infernal abyss; then they passed over and the bridge was drawn up and they stood within the courtyard, as securely caged as though the oubliettes prisoned them and gyves of steel were about their wrists.

"Excellents, my master, the Chevalier, would speak with you."

Thus said the guide—and, as he said it, Gavin understood that he had come to the house of Count Odin's father, the man who had loved Dora d'Istran, and for love of her had paid nearly twenty years of his precious liberty.

"And this is the Castle of Okna?" he exclaimed.

The guide smiled.

"No, excellency," he said, "the Castle of Okna lies many miles from here. You must speak to our master of that. That is his step, excellency!"

They listened and heard the tapping of a stick upon a stone pavement. It approached them laboriously; and after that which seemed an interminable interval, an old white-haired man appeared at one of the doors of the quadrangle and raising his voice bade them welcome. The voice was the one they recognized as that of the wood; but the face of the speaker sent a shudder through Gavin's veins which left him unashamed.

"Blind," he muttered, amazed—"the man is blind."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Through a Woman's Heart.

The blind man felt his way down a short flight of stairs, and, standing before the prisoners, he said in a voice indescribly harsh and grating:

"Gentlemen, welcome to Setchevo," and so he told them the name of the place to which their journey had carried them.

A man of middle stature, slightly bent, his face pitted and scarred revoltingly, his fine white hair combed down with scrupulous vanity upon his shoulders, the eyes, nevertheless, remained supreme in their power to repel and to dominate. Sightless, they seemed to search the very heart of him who braved them. Look where they might, the Englishmen's gaze came back at last to those unforgetable eyes. The horror of them was indescribable.

"Welcome to Setchevo, gentlemen. I am the Chevalier Georges Odin. Yes, I have heard of you and am glad to see you. Please to say which of you is Mr. Gavin Ord."

Gavin stepped forward and answered in a loud, courageous voice, "I am he." The blind man, passing trembling claws over the hands and faces of the two, smiled when he heard the voice and drew still nearer to them.

"You came from England to see me," he said; "you bring me news from my son and his English wife."

This was a thing to startle them. Did he, then, believe that Count Odin his son, had already married the Lady Evelyn, or was it but a coup de theatre to invite them to an indiscretion. Gavin, shrewd and watchful, decided in an instant upon the course he would take.

"I bring no message from your seignor has he, to my knowledge, an English wife. Permit me an interview where we can be alone and I will state my business freely. Your method of bringing us here, Chevalier, may be characteristic of the Balkans; but I do not think it will be understood by my English friends in Bukharest. You will be wise to remember that at the outset."

Here was a threat and a wise threat; but the old man heard it with disdain, his tongue licking his lips and a smile, vicious and cruel, upon his scarred face.

"My friend," he said, "at the donjon of Setchevo we think nothing of English opinion at Bukharest, as you will learn in good time. I thank you, however, for reminding me that you are my guests and fasting. Be good enough to follow me. The English, I remember, are eaters of flesh at dawn, being thus but one step removed from the cannibals. This house shall gratify you—please to follow me, I say."

Laboriously as he had descended the stairs, he climbed them again, the baffling smile still upon his face and the stick tapping weirdly upon the broken stone. The house within did not belie the house as it appeared from without. Arched corridors, cracked groins, moulded frescoes, great bare apartments with dismal furniture of brown oak, the whole building breathed a breath both chilling and pestilential. If there were a redeeming feature, Gavin found it in the so-called Banqueting Hall, a fine room gracefully panelled with a barrel vault and some antique mouldings original enough to awaken an artist's curiosity. The great buffet of this boasted plate was of considerable value and no little merit of design; and such a breakfast as the Cheavlier's servants had prepared was served upon a mighty oak table which had been a table when the second Mohammed ravaged Bosnia.

The men were hungry enough and they ate and drank with good appetite. Perhaps it was with some relief that they discovered a greater leniency within the house than they had found without. Discomfort is often the ally of fear; and whatever were the demerits of the House of Setchevo, the discomforts were relatively trifling. As for the old blind Chevalier, he sat at the head of the table just as though he had eyes to watch their every movement and to judge them thereby. Not until they had made a good meal of delicious coffee and fine white bread, with eggs and a dish of Kolesha in a stiff square lump from the pan—not until then did he intrude with a word, or appear in any way anxious to question them.

"You pay a tribute to our mountain air," he exclaimed at last, speaking a little to their astonishment in their tongue; "that is your English virtue, you can eat any time."

"And some of us are equally useful in the matter of drinking," rejoined Arthur Kenyon, who had begun to enjoy himself again, and was delighted to hear the English language.

The Chevalier, however, believed this to be some reflection upon his hospitality, and he said at once:

"I compliment you upon your frankness, mein herr—my servants shall bring wine."

"Oh, indeed, no, I referred to a very bad habit," exclaimed Kenyon quickly and then rising, he added, "With your permision, sir, I will leave you with my friend. I am sure you have both much to say to each other."

He did not wait for a reply but strolled off to the other end of the hall and thence out to the courtyard, no man saying him nay. Alone together, the Chevalier and Gavin sat a few moments in awkward silence, each debating the phrase with which he should open the argument. Meanwhile, a Turkish servant brought cigarettes, and the old man lighted one but immediately cast it from him.

"The blind cannot smoke," he said irritably; "that is one of the compensations of life which imagination cannot give us. Well, I am too old to complain—my world lies within these walls. It is wide enough for me."

"I am indeed sorry," said Gavin, for suffering could always arouse his sympathies wherever he found it. "Is there no hope at all of any relief?"

"None whatever. The nerves have perished. So much I owe to my English friendship—the last gift it bestowed upon me. Shall I tell you by what means I became blind, mein herr? Go down to the salt mines at Okna and when they blast the rock there, you will say, 'Georges Odin, the Englishman's friend, lost his eyesight in that mine.' It is true before God. And the man who put this calamity upon me—what of him? A rich man, mein herr, honored by the world, a great noble in his own country, a leader of the people, the possessor of much land and many houses. He sent me to Okna. We were boys together on the hills. If he shamed me in the race for all that young men seek of life, I suffered it because of my friendship. Then the night fell upon me—you know the story. He took from me the woman I loved. We met as men of honor should. I avenged the wrong—my God, what a vengeance with the Russian hounds upon my track and the fortress prison already garnished for me! Mein herr, you knew of this story or you would not have come to my house. Tell me what I shall add to it, for I listen patiently."

He was a fine old actor and the melodramic gesture with which he accompanied the recital would have made a deep impression upon one less given to cool analysis and reticent common sense than Gavin Ord. Gavin, indeed, had thought upon this strange history almost night and day since Lord Melbourne had first related it. If he had come to have a settled opinion upon it all, nothing that had yet transpired upon his journey from England altered that opinion or even modified it. This blind man he believed to have been the victim of the Russian Government. Lord Melbourne had acted treacherously in making no attempt to release his old rival from the mines; but had he so attempted, his efforts must have been futile—for the Russians believed that Georges Odin was their most relentless enemy and had pursued him with bitter and lasting animosity. So the affair stood in Gavin's mind—nor was he influenced in any way by the forensic appeal now addressed to him.

"Yes," he said slowly, "I know your story, Chevalier, and I am here because of it. Let me say in a word that I come because Lord Melbourne is anxious and ready, in so far as it is possible to do so, to atone for any wrong he may have done you. He desires nothing so much as that you two, who were friends in boyhood, should be reconciled now when years must be remembered and the accidents of life be provided for. So he sends me to Bukharest to invite you to England, there to hear him for himself and to tell him how best he may serve you. I can add nothing to that invitation save my own belief in his honesty, and in the reality of motives which now actuate him. If you decide to accompany me to England—"

An exclamation which was half an oath arrested him suddenly and he became aware that he was no longer heard patiently. In truth, the native temper of his race mastered Georges Odin in that moment and left him with no remembrance but that of the wretchedness of his own life and the depth of the passions which had contributed to it.

"Money!" he cried angrily, "this man offers me money!"

"Indeed, no—he offers you friendship."

TO BE CONTINUED

THE HUMBLE BEET

May Soon Be A Greater Friend To Man Than The Potato

School debaters will soon be able to add to their list of stock subjects for debate, the question: "Which is the greater friend of man, the potato or the beet?" And there will be a lot to say in favor of the beet. Some of our millions of minor American poets might compose an ode to this vegetable. The beet is a prolific producer of succulent root and the coarser kinds make excellent cattle feed. People who keep poultry hang a beet up in the chicken-house and it is a great thing for the chickens to have to peck at; it exercizes them in winter and also gives them needed vegetable matter. The finer varieties of beets make a grand dish for the table, either boiled or pickled, and the tops are fine for greens. The variety of beet known as chard is one of the most useful vegetables in the whole catalog of garden stuff. In this beet the growth goes to the tops and yields an inexhaustible supply of greens the season through—or the year around in some latitudes. The possibilities of the humble beet are shown by the fact that by careful selection it has been encouraged to produce up to 25 per cent of sugar. A beet is an individual sugar factory, and its importance as such is shown by the fact that when the war started practically half the world's consumption of sugar was derived from beets. And the latest thing is that specially selected beets are being sold by seedsmen for planting in flower gardens; the foliage is so beautiful that these beets are now used for purely ornamental purposes. One advantage of the beet is that it doesn't exhaust the soil as most vegetables do; on the contrary it helps build up the soil. If somebody would only develop a strain of beets that would give milk, produce butter and lay eggs, all would be forgiven. You think this is a joke, but it isn't; vegetable dairy and poultry products will be the common thing before many years. The possibilities are there; they merely await the patience and energy of some Edison or Burbank to see and develop them. The time is coming when the equivalent of meat, milk, butter and eggs will be raised in the home garden, as well as starch, sugar, etc. And in addition alcohol for running autos and farm motors if not to get drunk on, will likewise be produced locally.

RADIO SYSTEM OF U. S.

Panama Canal Stations Complete Circuit for Navy Chief.

With the completion of the new government wireless station at Panama canal, the secretary of the navy is now kept constantly in touch with every ship in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

The Panama station is equipped with three 600-foot towers and has a 100-kw. generating plant. Washington is now able to reach Alaska, the Straits of Magellan, all European stations, Honolulu, Manila, China and Japan. According to the plans of the navy department, the Arlington station will be brought up to the standard of the one at Panama, which is four times its strength, while the same is expected to be done at San Diego, Honolulu and Manila.

If it is found that the plant at Honolulu is able to keep communication open to Manila, only a substation will be maintained at Guam. Otherwise a large plant will be constructed at that point. A system of small stations along the coast lines has been in the course of development for the past year, and before long stations at intervals not greater than 200 miles will be in operation on both sides of the country. The military importance of this powerful system is almost beyond estimation. All official business of the navy department will be carried on by radio communication.—Popular Mechanics.

GET INDIAN RELICS IN NEVADA CAVERN

CAVE SEALED BY NATURE OVER 3,000 YEARS AGO.

General Fremont Heard of It When Crossing the Rockies—Piute Legends Record It.

The archaeological department of the University of Nevada has nearly completed the exploration of a cave in Nevada, sealed up by nature 3,000 years ago. It contains relics of what is believed to be the ancient race from which the American Indians sprung, a race far older than the Aztecs.

Among the things brought to light is the skull declared to be more than 5,000 years old certainly and possibly in existence several hundred thousand years ago. If these surmises are correct, it is older than the Piltdown skull, found in Kent, England.

Along with the skull were found many relics of a prehistoric race in a remarkable state of preservation, because they have been hermetically sealed in nature's own preservatives. Scientists all over the country have become interested in the find. The cavern, so far as it has been explored, is about 900 feet long, 400 feet wide and has a height of hundreds of feet in places. It is a magnificent tomb for a vanished race.

The first mention of this ancient civilization that is remembered by white men dates back to 1844, when General Fremont led from California a little band of whites across a new trail through the Rockies. He followed the Humboldt river until he came to the shores of what is now called Humboldt range of the mountains, and a mile south of Lovelock, Nev. In the region of the lake he entered the land of the Piute, the chief of whom was Winnemucca. The trail makers were met by the Indian chieftain with open arms.

General Fremont and his party were guests of the Piute band for many days. Familiarity with other tribes had taught Fremont a method of communication by means of signs. He asked the Indian chief if he, in his great wisdom, could tell the white man whence came the red man—their origin. The aged chief by signs indicated that the history of the Indians went back to the beginning of the world. It told how his ancestors had driven a whole nation into a huge cavern and sealed them there to perish.

When years later Chief Winnemucca had learned the white man's tongue the Piute legends spread among the pioneer miners and finally reached the ears of scientific men. With the coming of education into Nevada in the last twenty-five years interest quickened with reported fossil discoveries in the beds of the extinct rivers and on the walls of canyons. At Winnemucca's death his daughter Sarah became attached to the families of army officers, and through them the legends became public when they were recounted in a book printed in 1870.

Her granddaughter, Sarrah Winnemucca, was educated in a reservation school. Her imagination fired by the legends of her people, she repeated them to her instructors, until finally Prof. J. C. Jones, chief of the archaeological department of the State university, determined to make a search for the lost cave. The stories indicated that it must be somewhere near the Humboldt lake. Sarah Winnemucca picked a spot as near as the legends could guide her, from which point the scientists conducted their search successfully.

IT BOOSTS VEGETATION.

Aluminum Plays Vital Part in Growth of Shrubbery.

Recent experiments have shewn that aluminum and manganese play an important part in the growth of vegetation. Prof. Stoklasa of Prague concludes that these elements possess a special function in the process of assimilation, and his experiments have shown that it is the leaves which contain the greatest quantities of them.

Gabriel Bertrand has shown that vegetable production can be increased by adding manganese to the nutrition. All vegetables that contain a certain quantity of manganese always contain aluminum.— World's Advance.

WILL MAKE WRITING EASIER.

Two New Devices for Use With Either Pen or Pencil.

Two recent inventions—one by a Texas man and the other by a Chicagoan—bid fair to make writing an easy task and far less tiring.

One is a device for use with any pen or pencil of the writer, and the shape of the device, with a weight placed in the lower portion of it, makes the movement of the writing instrument an easy matter.

The other invention is a pen and pencil holder. Slipped over the end of a pen or pencil, this device, which is provided with a sleeve through which the index finger is passed, also makes writing a thing to be enjoyed.

HINDU MYSTERY SHOWN.

Noted Basket Trick Is Performed In All Sections of India.

Those who have been to India can hardly have failed to see the great basket trick. Indeed this trick has been performed on the theatrical stage in Europe and America, by Hindu magicians, and always with startling effect. Travelers have told exaggerated tales about it, but when investigated it proves to have no more mystery or real magic about it than any of the tricks which form the stock in trade of professional magicians in all countries.

A large basket is brought on the scene. This has a hinged top which opens up to show the inside empty. The magician displays it to the audience. Meantime a Hindu girl runs out and exhibits herself to all, so that they can identify her again. She is dressed in clothes of brilliant colors, to make this easier.

The magician then starts to catch her and she runs about and tries to escape from him. She darts in and out, but finally he grabs her, throws a sheet over her, crams her into the basket and shuts the lid. Then he takes a sword and jabs it down through the basket a number of times. The girl utters horrible screams, which grow weaker and at leangth cease, and the magician withdraws the sword, which is seen to be covered with blood.

In conclusion, he opens the basket and shows it apparently empty, and as his two assistants are carrying it away, the girl springs out from among the audience and exhibits herself alive and unharmed.

A considerable amount of dexterity is involvedin the performance, but it is nothing but a piece of common trickery throughout. The basket has a movable partition in it. The girl who is placed in the basket is a substitute girl, and is very slender; she is a contortionist and can twist herself up into a remarkably small space—being trained for this by months of practice.

When the magician chases the original girl, she manages to run behind a screen or some other object, and it is at this moment that the magician throws the sheet over the substitute girl, who is dressed in the same brilliant colors as the first one and changes places with her. The magician places the substitute girl in the basket, but the audience are under the fixed impression that it is the same girl they have already seen. —Pathfinder.

SHADOW SURGERY LATEST.

X-Ray and Right Angled Forceps Make Quick Work.

We now have what is called "radioscopic surgery." Apparatus devised especially for this by Dr. Wullyamoz includes a table, a fluroscope and surgical instruments such as pincers, forceps, needles and curettes—all having the peculiarity that they are bent at right angles.

The surgeon utilizes the X-rays during the operation, seeing the body as a translucent substance. He can not, however, use surgical instruments of the usual form, since their shadows would mask, during the operation, that of the foreign body that he wishes to reach. So. Dr. Wullyamoz has adopted the curious device of bending them at right angles. Thanks to this peculiarity, the operator directs his scalpel or forceps with precision.

It is sufficient, after having centered the bulb and ascertained by two radioscopic examinations at right angles, the exact position of the bullet, to place the patient in such an attitude that the shadow of the bullet or fragment of shell coincides with that of his probe. Then he cuts the skin at the point so determined, places his forceps in the incision, causing the shadow of its end to fall on that of the bullet and thrusts it in vertically. When the forceps touch the foreign body he opens them and grasps it. Extraction is accomplished in this way with great rapidity and certainty, with a bullet of any kind whatever in less than a minute and without injury to the surrounding tissues.

MAGELLAN AND ISLANDS

When Europeans Learned of New World's Size.

It was not until some thirty years after Columbus discovered America that the Europeans learned of the new world's immense size. The explorers who visited it in those early years believed America to be an archipeligo and constantly sought for a strait or passage through it which would permit them to reach the spice islands of the east to make a fortune for themselves by carrying home cargoes of the valuable products of that region.

As every schoolboy knows it was Magellan, a Portuguese captain in the service of Spain, who found the passage round the southern extremity of South America. With a rebellious crew he had spent several months along the Brazilian coast, then, despite the fear that the vessel was heading directly for the south pole whence they could never return, they sailed south along the coast. On Oct. 21, 1520, his little flotilla entered the strait at the southern end of the continent which now bears Magellan's name. In honor of the day they called it the "Strait of the Eleven Thousand Virgins."

Silence is a virtue that is frequently overlooked.